

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 06457 310105Z

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 VO-03 SCA-01 TRSE-00 CPR-02 L-03 NSC-07

SS-20 SP-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 PA-04

RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01

INSE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 DRC-01 /111 W

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3028

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 6457

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MX

SUBJECT: ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS: PRESS RELEASE

REF: MEXICO 6383

FOR KUBISCH

1. APPRECIATE CONCURRENCE IN MY RECOMMENDATION TO DELAY
RELEASE OF PRESS STATEMENT ON BRACEROS.

2. AS REGARDS FORM OF RELEASE, I HAVE CAREFULLY CONSIDERED
AND REVIEWED WITH COUNTRY TEAM THE WHOLE QUESTION OF A
PRESS RELEASE ON THE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS ISSUE. THERE IS
CONSIDERABLE CONSENSUS HERE THAT THE TEXT OF THE PRESS
RELEASE AS APPROVED IN WASHINGTON DOES NOT RESPOND FULLY
TO THE MORE SIGNIFICANT ASPECTS OF THIS ISSUE, AND THERE
IS SOME FEELING THAT THE APPROVED RELEASE IS LESS CORDIAL
IN TONE THAN IS THE NOTE ITSELF. I AM PREPARING A REVISED
VERSION, WHICH WHILE NOT ACTUALLY PROVIDING THE TEXT OF
OUR NOTE, DOES COVER MORE FULLY ALL THE POINTS MADE IN IT,
IN A CLOSE SUMMARY THEREOF.

3. IN A VERY CLEAR SENSE RABASA'S JUNE 19 INITIATIVE WAS
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PAGE 02 MEXICO 06457 310105Z

INTENDED MORE TO IMPRESS MEDIA CRITICS AND ULTIMATELY

MEXICAN PUBLIC OPINION THAN TO COMMUNICATE REAL QUESTIONS TO THE USG. MOST OF THE POINTS HE RAISED, AND TO WHICH WE RESPOND IN OUR REPLY TO THE JUNE 19 NOTE, WERE CAREFULLY AND IN A MOST FRIENDLY MANNER ADDRESSED IN SECRETARY KISSINGER'S JANUARY 4 LETTER TO RABASA. RABASA, IN HIS COMMENTS TO ME WHEN HE ADVISED ME OF THE FORTHCOMING NOTE, ALSO MADE NO BONES ABOUT HIS CONCERN OVER PRESS CRITICISM, MOST OF WHICH HAD ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO WITH THE ISSUE OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS. THIS IS NOT TO SAY, OF COURSE, THAT BOTH RABASA AND PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA ARE NOT REALLY CONCERNED WITH THE ILLEGALS QUESTION. THIS IS A DEEPLY EMOTIONAL ISSUE HERE AND AS THE DEPT. IS AWARE NOT ONLY THE PRESS AND MEDIA, BUT HIGH MEXICAN OFFICIALS, HAVE BEEN CRITICAL OF US ON REPEATED OCCASIONS.

4. THE GOM HAS OFTEN INDICATED THAT IT CONSIDERS THE ILLEGALS ISSUE AS THE OUTSTANDING BILATERAL QUESTION IN USG-GOM RELATIONS. ACCORDINGLY, THERE CAN HARDLY BE ANY MORE IMPORTANT ISSUE IN MEXICAN PUBLIC OPINION WITH RESPECT TO THE USG IMAGE AS PERCEIVED IN MEXICO. OUR BEST EFFORTS TO INFLUENCE MEXICAN OPINION IN FAVOR THE U.S. MUST BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED IF THE MAN IN THE STREET HEARS AND READS ACCUSATIONS BY HIGH MEXICAN AUTHORITIES AGAINST THE U.S. AND YET HEARS NO U.S. RESPONSE.

5. ON THE BASIS OF THE FOREGOING, I AM PERSUADED THAT IT IS IN OUR BEST INTEREST TO PRESENT THE U.S. POSITION TO MEXICAN PUBLIC OPINION. IN FACT, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT NOT TO DO THIS IN VIEW OF THE VERY GREAT PRESS INTEREST IN OUR EVENTUAL REPLY TO THE MEXICAN NOTE.

6. AT THE SAME TIME I SEE ADVANTAGE IN NOT WILLFULLY ENTERING INTO WHAT MIGHT DEVELOP INTO A POLEMICAL EXCHANGE WITH THE GOM, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT WE HAVE THE PRESS AND MEDIA STACKED AGAINST US.

7. THUS REGARDING TIMING RATHER THAN RELEASING ANY PRESS STATEMENT COLD, IT MIGHT BE PREFERABLE AS A FIRST STEP TO ANSWER PRESS QUESTIONS REGARDING OUR REPLY, KEEPING THE ACTUAL RELEASE OF THE STATEMENT FOR A POSSIBLE SECONDARY PHASE THUS KEEPING MORE CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 MEXICO 06457 310105Z

OPTIONS OPEN TO US. I WILL HAVE A BETTER FEEL FOR THE APPROPRIATE TACTICS AFTER I HAVE HAD A CONVERSATION WITH RABASA.
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Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
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Disposition Authority: boyleja
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
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